

Sarnia

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For Nicole

at check out time
we punch the clock
and leave the pipes
to hum

pass the flask around
two nips apiece
the front side's been engraved

name of a friend
one of us, one of the gang
damn shame when it happened

we drive to the Ups
and Downs for pitchers
and a plate of spicy wings

laughing and drinking
telling stories
we already know by heart

these days
the streets are quiet
people went somewhere else

darkness whips
through the hollow
homes

soon we're nice and
plastered, stumble out
towards the lake

where we shout and holler
at the blood orange
skinny dipping in the distance

with pale legs in the surf
i look at my loved ones and smile,
only a few weeks left
till check out time.